

# Learning Objectives - Competencies

- Information Processing. The *new dental hygiene graduate must be able to* acquire and synthesize information in a critical, scientific, and effective manner.

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- Accept responsibility for solving problems and making decisions based on accepted scientific principles.
  - Critically analyze published reports of oral health research and apply this information to the evidence – based practice of dental hygiene.
  - Evaluate and/or apply published data on the safety and efficacy of oral health products and treatments.
  - Communicate professional knowledge orally and in writing.
  - Employ the principles of scientific writing.
  - Use sound judgment in processing information, professional decision making and application of new information to patient/client care.
  - Use computer technology to access and share information.
- **PROCESS OF CARE** The dental hygienist is a licensed preventive oral health professional who provides educational and clinical services in the support of optimal oral health. The dental hygiene process of care applies principles from the biomedical, clinical and social sciences to diverse populations of all ages that may include the medically compromised, mentally or physically challenged, and socially or culturally disadvantaged.
- Assessment. The *new dental hygiene graduate must be able to* systematically collect, analyze and accurately record baseline data on the general, oral and psychosocial health status of patients/clients using methods consistent with medicolegal principles.

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- Recognize medical conditions that require special precautions or consideration prior to or during dental hygiene treatment.
  - Identify the patient at risk for a medical emergency, take steps to prevent an emergency and be prepared to manage an emergency should it occur during an appointment.
- Diagnosis.\* The *new dental hygiene graduate must be able to* use critical decision making skills to reach conclusions about patient/client's dental hygiene needs based on the assessment data.

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- Use assessment findings, etiologic and risk factors, and clinical data to determine a dental hygiene diagnosis.
- Identify significant findings that impact on the delivery of dental hygiene services.
- Obtain consultations as indicated.

\*Note: As defined in the dental hygiene literature the “dental hygiene diagnosis” identifies patient needs that direct dental hygiene care. This does not preclude the dental diagnosis.

- Implementation. The *new dental hygiene graduate must be able to* provide treatment that includes preventive and therapeutic services designed to achieve and maintain oral health and assist the patient/client in achieving oral health goals.
  - Control pain and anxiety during treatment through the use of legally accepted clinical techniques and appropriate behavioral management strategies.
  - Select and administer appropriate chemotherapeutic agents within the scope of dental hygiene practice.